DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 363 032 EC 302 482

AUTHOR Sultana, Qaisar
TITLE Special Education in Pakistan.
PUB DATE Apr 93
NOTE 8p.; Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the Council for Exceptional Children (71st, San Antonio, TX, April 5-9, 1993).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Disabilities; Educational Objectives; *Educational Practices; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; *Government Role; Graduate Study; Incidence; Long Range Planning; *Program Administration; *Special Education; Teacher Education; Teacher Qualifications
IDENTIFIERS *Pakistan

ABSTRACT

This paper briefly describes the current status of special education in Pakistan, noting its relatively brief history, the lack of incidence figures, the administrative organization and structure, personnel preparation, the role of nongovernmental organizations, and the recognition of four categories of disability: mental retardation, physical handicaps, visual impairments, and hearing impairments. The paper notes that special education in Pakistan is under the authority of the Ministry of Health; special education services are based on English models; more private than public schools provide special education; all special education teachers hold a graduate degree (most in psychology); a prerequisite for special education teacher education is a graduate degree; all special education teachers are federal employees and work on a 12-month contract; there are presently no plans for mainstreaming though mainstreaming is a goal in the Five Year Plan; and volunteerism is high. Figures illustrate the organizational model and administrative structure of special education in the country. (DB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED 363 032

SPECIAL EDUCATION IN PAKISTAN

paper presented

by

Dr. Qaisar Sultana

at

The annual international convention of the

Council for Exceptional Children

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Qaisar Sultana
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

San Antonio, Texas

April 5 - 9, 1993

EC 303482

SPECIAL EDUCATION IN PAKISTAN

Pakistan is a third-world country. Special education in Pakistan, like other third-world countries, is a relatively new phenomenon. The momentum for special education in Pakistan gained political blessings and unlimited financial support during the presidency of the late Zia-al Haq who had an exceptional child of his own. The late president invited special education experts from countries including the U. S., Great Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, Japan, Egypt, Jordan, and Kuwait for consultation. The Government of Pakistan also sent educators, administrators, architects, medical doctors, etc. to many foreign countries to observe special education programs and services. In 1983 I taught a special education course on a voluntary basis for the teachers of a special education school run by the Association for Children with Learning and Behavior Problems, a non-profit organization. In 1984 I had the privilege to be invited by the Government of Pakistan as a Special Education Consultant and have continued to serve in that capacity. The course I had taught in 1983 was the first special education course offered in Pakistan. In December 1991- January 1992, I served as a World Health Organization (WHO) consultant to the Government of Pakistan, and taught the 100th special education course in the country. In eight years 100 special education courses on a wide variety of topics have been taught in the country by experts from around the world.

The development and growth of special education in Pakistan is enlightening. As a third-world country Pakistan has limited financial resources. Statistics are not available on the incidence and or prevalence of the individuals with disabilities. Given the socio-economic conditions (intermarriage, early marriage, non-existing pre-natal, post-natal, and peri-natal care, malnutrition, poor medical care, population density and over popula tion, etc.) I suspect the number of children with disabilities is quite high. Compared to the expected number of students with disabilities the students receiving special education programs and services is negligible. Yet the country has made remarkable progress both in the area of special education teacher preparation and the range of services provided to children with disabilities.

The administrative organization and the structure of special education in Pakistan is unique. It has strengths and weakness. It provides for the needs of the country but it has also contributed political and social problems. An understanding of this structure is necessary for those who want to become involved in special education in Pakistan.

Figures one and two represent the administrative structure of special education, a model of special education service delivery, and the administrative hierarchy of teacher preparation. These can serve as guide to those interested in working in Pakistan as well as others from the third world countries interested and involved in the development of special education programs and services.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Figure two represents the administrative complexity which is also an administrative problem. The three major universities in the country administratively are under the Ministry of Education but the Special Education Teacher Education programs, all of which are graduate level, are administered by the Ministry of Health. Within each university there is a parallel administrative system. People in the Ministry of Health are not educators and the administration of educational programs suffers from their lack of expertise and experience.

Presently Pakistan recognizes four categories of disability: mental retardation, physical Handicaps, visual Impairments, and hearing Impairments. Children who have serious emotional problems (autism, childhood schizophrenia, and other psychotic and neurotic disorders) are covered under the label of Mental Illness. These children are provided psychiatric and/or psychological services by the Departments of Psychiatry and/or Departments of neuropsychiatry in any hospital. Learning disability is not recognized as a category of disability. There are no special education programs for the emotionally disturbed and the learning disabled students.

Educational programs for children in the four categories are provided at both public and private expense. The Special Education Complexes (re. Figure one) are public schools, each devoted to one category of disability. There are numerous private schools (NGOs as they are called) operated by foreign missionary groups and other non-profit organizations all over the country which are active in the delivery of services. In addition, there are vocational programs run by non-profit organizations for disabled adults. The range of services and the quality of programs varies from one school to another depending on the financial resources of each.

The degree of public involvement in the NGOs (non-government organizations) is remarkable. Philanthropists are generous with their contributions and innumerable professional and non-professional volunteers devote countless hours to provide quality programming. Compassion is visible. Some pronounced characteristics of special education in Pakistan are as follows:

* Special Education is under the authority of Ministry of Health rather than the Ministry of Education, therefore the model of services provided has a medical orientation rather than an educational one.

* The model of special education service delivery is imported primarily from England. It has been integrated with other European and Middle Eastern models. Adaptations have been made to make it more suitable for Pakistan.

* Special education is provided by public as well as private schools. The number of private schools exceeds the number of public schools. Parents have to pay for the educational expenses of children who are in the private schools. Children are sent to private schools because there are only a very few public schools available.

* All teachers in both public and private schools hold at least a graduate degree in some discipline, mostly in psychology.

* Prerequisite for admission into special education teacher education is a graduate degree in psychology, sociology, physical therapy, nursing, social work, or education.

* Special education teacher preparation programs are separate from the regular education teacher preparation program and are administered by a different ministry. Regular education teacher preparation is administered by the Ministry of Education while the special education teacher preparation is administered by the Ministry of Health.

* There are two different types of special education teacher preparation programs: traditional and non-traditional. The traditional programs are located at the Punjab and Karachi universities and consist of regular semesterly course work. The non-traditional programs are provided primarily through inservice and professional development opportunities to personnel who are already teaching in special education classrooms.

* This inservice training is provided in the form of short and intensive courses taught by foreign experts. These experts are physicians, psychologists, speech-language pathologists, audiologists, and special educators; mostly from England, others from Germany, the Netherlands, Japan, and the United States.

* Special education teachers have an interdisciplinary and comprehensive training. They are not inducted into any single philosophy, theory, orientation, and approach. They have a vast theoretical knowledge. They are perceptive of the differences in the various theories. They integrate the theories in their practice.

* All special education teachers in the country are federal employees (not so for regular education teachers). Federal employees enjoy a higher social and economic status. Special education is treated preferentially.

* All special education teachers work on a twelve month contract (not so for regular education teachers). Many of the special education teachers do not like it. Summers are devoted primarily to taking courses and or preparing for their teaching responsibilities in the coming year.

* Special education complexes are like special day schools in the U. S. Special education children are segregated from the non-disabled children. There are presently no plans for mainstreaming even though mainstreaming is one of the goals of the Five Year Plan.

* Every special education complex, in addition to special education teachers, has a full time psychologist, physician, and physical therapist on its faculty. Services provided to children are quite comprehensive.

* All special education children are provided free transportation to and from school (not so for non-disabled children). This has created a problem for the Ministry of Education because schools do not provide transportation to the non-disabled children.

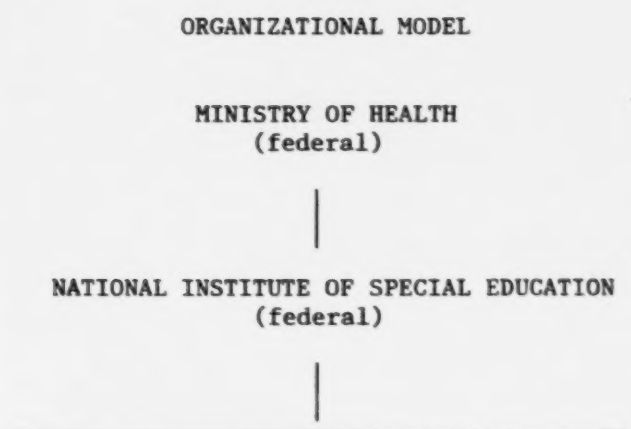
* Parents of children with disabilities are desperate and willing to do anything and everything to help their children. They read everything they can find and travel long distances to talk to foreign experts. Schools do not work closely with parents. Communication between parents and schools is limited. Schools have not utilized parents' help which is abundantly available.

* Volunteerism is high both among professionals and non-professionals. Volunteers range from a house-wife to a fully qualified, experienced physician. They work anywhere from a few hours a week to a several hours a day.

Pakistan is a fertile ground for special educators and for preservice teachers. My involvement in Pakistan has contributed to my growth in, understanding, and appreciation of the field of special education. I am sure that the same is true of the many professionals in Pakistan with whom I am involved. It is a mutually beneficial relationship.

Figure: 1

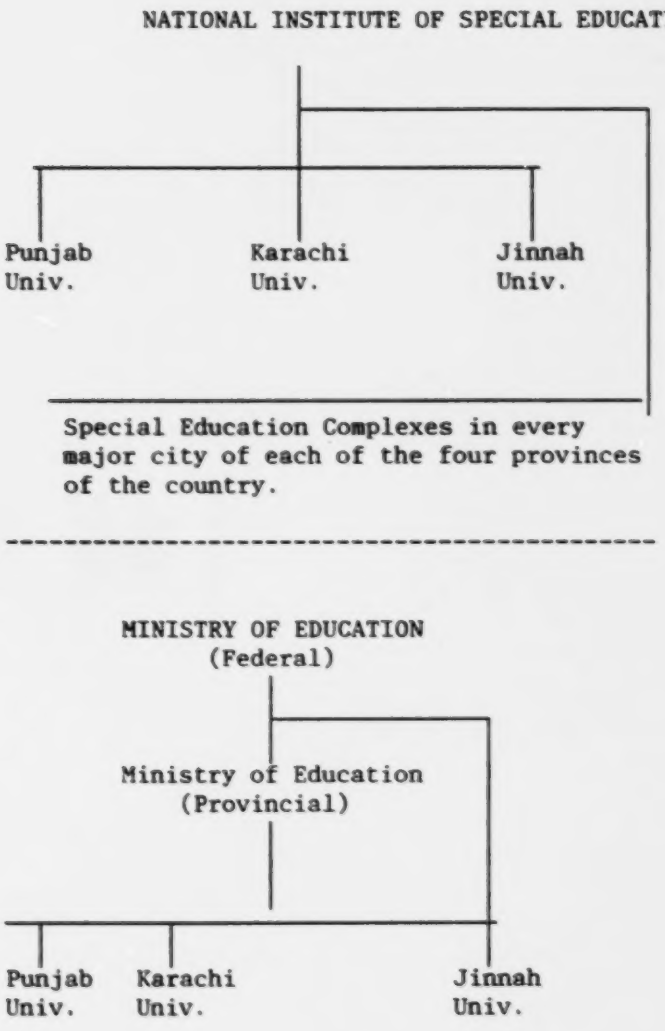
ORGANIZATIONAL MODEL



Punjab, Baluchistan, Sind, and NWFP (North Western Frontier Province) are names of the four provinces of Pakistan. A province is an equivalent of a state in the U. S. Special Education complexes are located in each province. Each complex consists of a cluster of four schools, one each for the mentally retarded, physically disabled, visually impaired, and hearing impaired.

Figure 2

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER PREPARATION


NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
Punjab Univ.
Karachi Univ.
Jinnah Univ.
Special Education Complexes in every major city of each of the four provinces of the country.
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION (Federal)
Ministry of Education (Provincial)
Punjab Univ.
Karachi Univ.
Jinnah Univ.